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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Sir:

This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed pursuant to 37 C.F.R \$1.97 before the mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits.

Each item of information contained herein was first cited in an International Search Report in a counterpart application not more than three months prior to the filing of this information disclosure statement.

The following information is being disclosed to the Patent and Trademark Office as information that may be material to the examination of the above-identified patent application.

The above-identified patent application has a corresponding PCT patent application No. PCT/US00/33615. Enclosed is a copy of an International Search Report for the corresponding application together with the cited references. PTO Form 1449 is also enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date indicated below as first class mail in an envelope address to the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231.

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